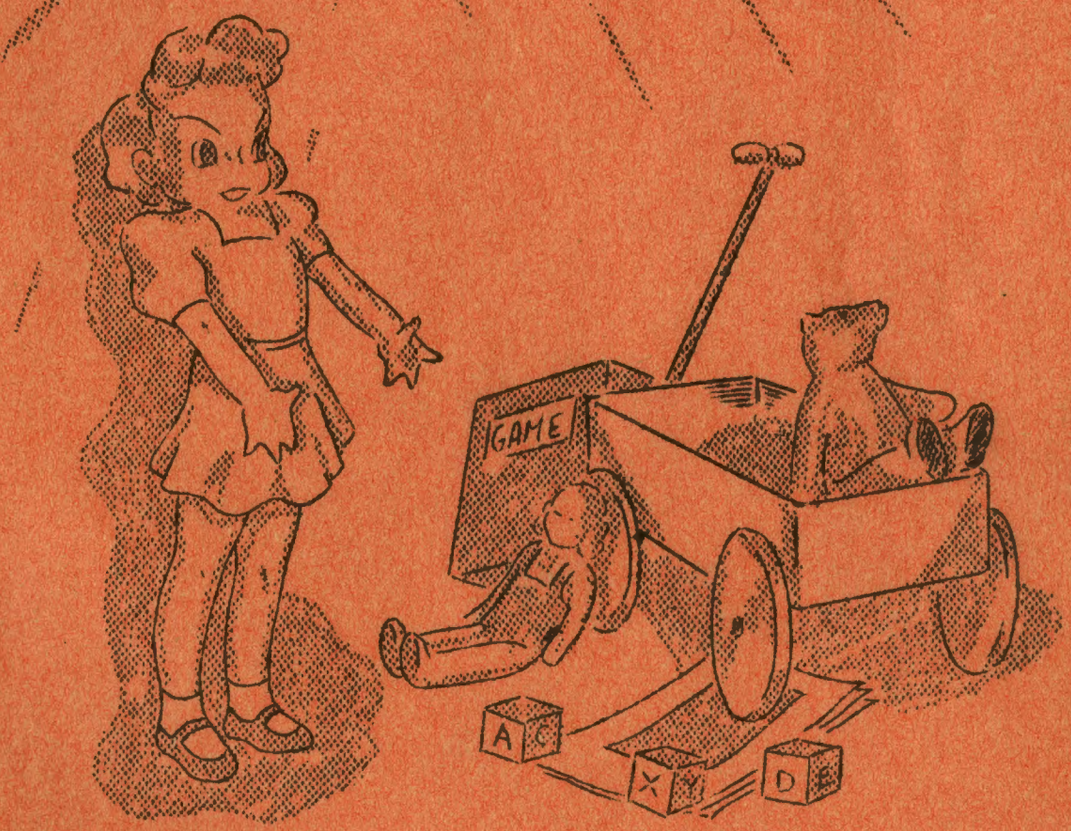
INYO COUNTY
FREE LIBRARY

TOY LOAN LIBRARY



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

MANZANAR, CALIFORNIA

Introduction

This booklet describes the Hanover Toy Loan Service organized by Miss Ruth Beckwith, Hanover Elementary Supervisor. The toy loan center was developed to meet the need for play material for Hanover's smaller children. Many large families were crowded in a single room, the child's play life was limited because of lack of physical space. The $5.00 per month earned by the family head would not go around to buy play-well necessities, much less to buy play material for the younger children.

A toy loan library provides an opportunity for children to borrow toys, play with them, and return the toys as they would their library books.

The children have enjoyed the service provided by their toy library. Miss Beckwith, who has so ably managed the library, deserves much credit for the fine attitude manifested by the children toward the new service in which the Toy Loan Library has operated.

Since the toys were purchased by money belonging to the children, the library will continue as long as there are preschool children in Hanover.

Genevieve W. Carter
Superintendent of Education

INTRODUCTION

This booklet describes the Manzanar Toy Loan Project organized by Miss Ruth Beckwith, Senior Elementary Teacher. The toy loan center was developed to meet the need for play material for Manzanar's smaller children. When large families were crowded in a single room, the child's play life was limited because of lack of physical space. The $16.00 per month earned by the family head would not go around to buy personal necessities, much less to buy play material for the younger children.

The Toy Loan Library provides an opportunity for children to borrow toys, play with them, and return the toys as they would their library books.

The children have enjoyed the service provided by their Toy Library. Miss Beckwith, who has so ably organized the library deserves much credit for the fine spirit and manner in which the Toy Loan Library has operated.

Since the toys were purchased by money belonging to the evacuees, the Library will continue as long as there are evacuee children in Manzarar.

Genevieve W. Carter

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Superintendent of Education

The Toy Loan Center at the Manzanar War Relocation Project

Throughout the center at Manzanar it has always been noticeable that small children lack sufficient toys. The teen age boys and girls have been provided with recreation centers for club organizations, games, and dances. Manzanar has a number of athletic centers with adequate equipment--tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and basketball courts. During the sudden rush of evacuation it was not possible for families to bring a toy box for the children since the baggage which they were permitted to bring was so limited. The nursery schools and kindergartens were gradually well equipped with toys and play equipment as the organization got underway. Interested individuals sent in toys from the outside. The pre-school PTA organization raised money and bought most of their own equipment. The need for a toy loan center had existed since the beginning of the center. Although the need had been discussed in various meetings of the PTA groups, Coordinating Councils and church groups, there was no way of promoting such a project until money outside of WRA funds could be raised. WRA could furnish Education play equipment for the pre-school and it could furnish athletic equipment for the physical education program, but there was no means of justifying expenditures for a toy loan center where the children could borrow toys on a personal basis to take home for play in the neighborhood or in the family.

Toy Loan Plans are Begun

During the Christmas holidays in 1943, the Affiliated Protestant Churches from all over the country sent gifts to the children in the Manzanar project. Included among these presents were cash gifts which amounted to about $450. The toys which were received were distributed among the neighborhood blocks and were presented to the children at their block Christmas party. The cash gifts were put under the care of a committee from the Manzanar Protestant churches. This committee was given the responsibility of deciding the use of the cash fund which would best benefit the Manzanar children. There followed several meetings of this committee headed by Reverend Henry Bovenkerk. The committee consulted with the school officials and on the recommendation of the Superintendent and School Principals, it was suggested that some of the money be used for playground equipment for elementary age children and that a toy loan center be started. There was no money in the Education budget that could be spent for improvement of the school playground or for the purchase of play equipment.

In the fall of 1943, Public Works Section constructed playground equipment. Most of this was in the nature of basketball courts and softball fields. Plans were drawn for the toy loan center and a room centrally located in Block 16, which houses the elementary school, was set aside for the toy loan center. One of the senior elementary teachers was placed in

charge of the toy loan library. The attached drawing shows the layout of the toy loan room which allows for several tables and chairs for instruction of games. A checking desk and railing divides the toy room and the two main sections. The toys are all placed on open shelves and a re visible so that the children can indicate their choice of toys.

War time restrictions limited the type of toys that were available for purchase. These children who have not been associated so closely with the war games played by children on the outside were not as interested in war toys as most children would be. Since most toys on the market today are war toys, the purchase of toys which would interest the children was a problem. It was not possible to buy enough dolls nor was it possible to buy locomotive toys which are so desired by the younger boys. The toy stock had an ample supply of games, puzzles, and miniature toys.

Organization of the Manzanar Toy Loan Library

After the partitions, tables, chairs, and shelves had been installed and painted, plans were organized for the distribution of the toys. Since the number and types of toys were inadequate for all of our pre-school and elementary children, certain decisions had to be made in working out an equitable distribution of the available toys. The kindergarten and nursery children were fairly well provided for in their well equipped school centers, consequently it was decided to reserve the toy loan center for the use of elementary school children for the time being. After the close of the nursery and kindergarten centers it was suggested that their toys and equipment be consolidated with the toy loan library for the service of all children below the age of twelve.

Teachers were asked to carry on an educational program in the use and care of toys before actual distribution was initiated. Each room would check out a certain type and number of toys and after instruction on how to play the games, children were allowed a play period as a reward or special occasion. Later on, certain children were nominated from each room each week to check out toys from the toy library. This was necessary because of the limited number of certain types of toys.

The Toy Loan Librarian visited the County Toy Loan Centers in the Los Angeles area and consulted with their director, on cards, forms, and the system of distribution of toys and of mending and repairing toys.

A meeting was called with the Manzanar PTA Executive Council, and through the PTA, publicity and interpretation of the toy loan library was brought before the parents. It was planned to work closely with the PTA group because this would be the group who would carry on the toy loan library after the teachers had left the center. Since the toys were not purchased with WRA funds, toys can be made available for children until the center closes, since its operation will not be dependent on any particular section.

The forms which were worked out for library use and the distribution of toys are found in the appendix of this booklet. The center is open two afternoons each week from 3 until 5. One day for the nine primary rooms and the other day for the nine elementary classes.

Toy Lending Library Objectives

The Manzanar Toy Loan Library differs in several aspects from the ordinary toy loan center in outside communities:

(1) The Community of Manzanar is a temporary one and the life of the toy loan center is limited.

(2) There is no sponsor for the toy loan center at Manzanar as you find in other communities where the toy loan center is usually sponsored by such organizations as Women's clubs, Boy Scouts, or YWCA.

(3) The community has had no part in building and contributing to the toy loan library. There was no toy drive publicity, no organization or work shops to prepare the toys for loan. The Manzanar toy loan library initiated from the cash gift offerings of the Protestant churches and was a means of using this money in a most effective way for all of the small children in the community.

Educational Opportunities

The toy loan provides several educational opportunities for developing desirable social habits in children.

(1) Because of the unnatural home situation in communal living there is very little to tie the child to his one room family apartment. When he can bring home a game or a toy this gives him an added purpose for staying in the room with the family group.

(2) Responsibility is developed through the observance of the merit codes which are used in the distribution of the toys. For example, if the child has taken good care of his toys, has kept it in clean and undamaged condition except for normal wear and has returned it on time he can receive an"S" on his card. This means that his record for borrowing that particular toy has been satisfactory. He is commended for this and is now permitted to take another toy when his turn comes. If he has been careless or received an "U" he is penalized for a while by not being permitted to take out a toy at his next turn.

(3) Such qualities as fair play, good sportsmanship, and consideration for others are developing as the teachers give game instruction to the

children and supervise their play. Chinese checkers and checkers lend themselves well to this type of training.

(4) Learning new games widens their opportunities for social contacts because it gives various media for playing with other children. Most of their foreign born parents are not acquainted with the normal American games that children play and it is necessary for the school to supplement this part of childhood training.

(5) There are many things that children in a normal community can do in the way of recreation and fun that are denied children in a relocation center. An evacuee child cannot visit the zoo, go to a circus, ride in an automobile or streetcar. He cannot go on a hike, go to the beach for swimming, ride a pony or a merry-go-round. The Toy Loan Library supplements the child's out of school life.

Waiting for the Toy Loan to Open

Checking out the Toys

Two First Graders Experiment with New Toys

The Teacher gives Game Instruction
To a Fifth Grade Class

New Dolls for the Toy Loan have Arrived

Free Period Activity

APPENDIX

I. Floor Plan of Toy Loan Center

II. Mimeographed Forms used by the Toy Loan Center

Application Letter

Application Card

Borrower's Card

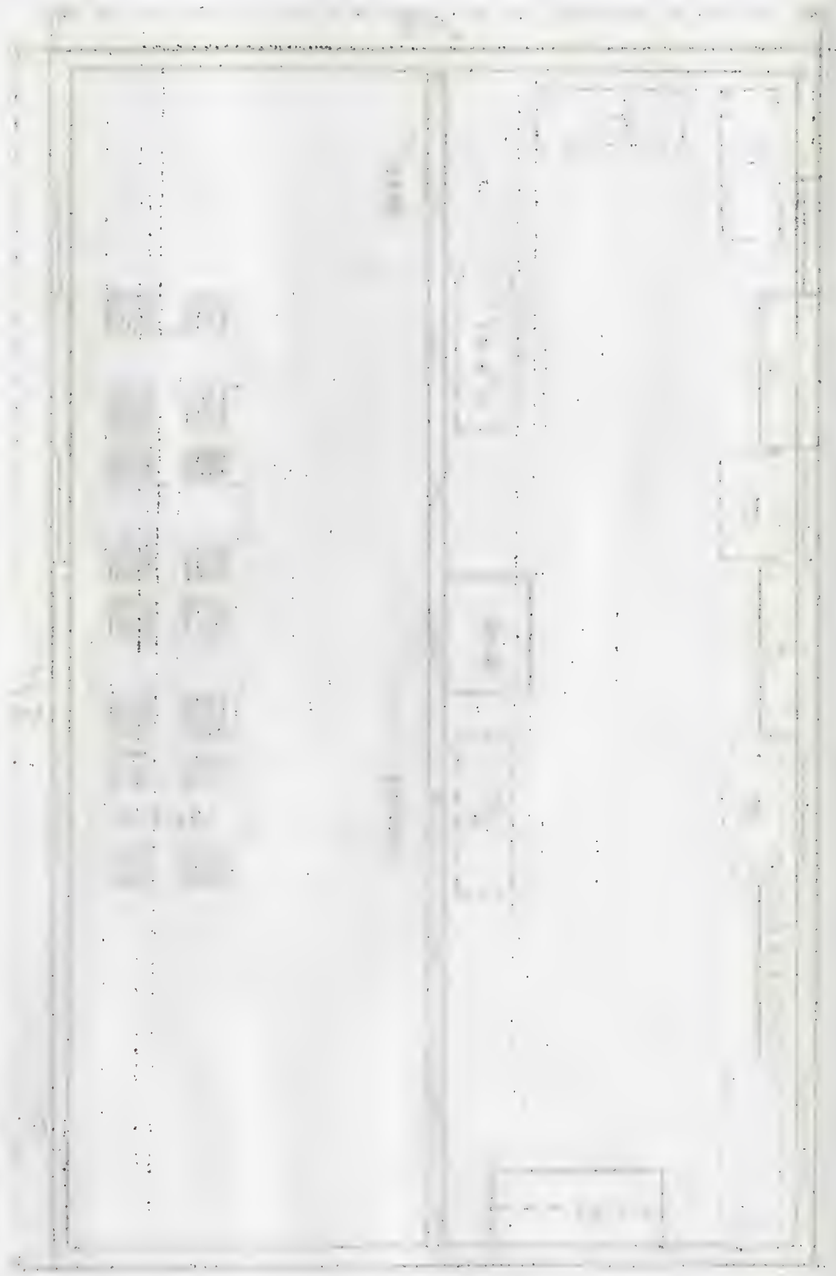
First Notice of Overdue Toy

Second Notice of Overdue Toy

TOY LOAN CENTER

----- Tables

——— Cabinets



MANZANAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Manzanar, California

To:_____

Your child is interested in the Toy Lending Center which has been opened in connection with the Elementary School in Block 16.

We would like your child to become a member.

A Toy Lending Center is similar to a book library. Toys are loaned which help in the constructive development of the child. They help to provide the children with something to do when outside of school. The toys are loaned on a 7-day period. There are no fines for delay in returning the toys or for toys that are broken. However, we wish the child to learn to be prompt and to learn to take care of and to appreciate the toys. Therefore, we want them to be taken care of and to be returned in as good condition as possible. If the child has been careless or the toy is overdue, we withhold toys from him for a certain period.

We would appreciate your cooperation in the above, and feel sure that your child will benefit by the use of the Center which has been provided for them through the generosity of the Protestant churches throughout the country.

If this meets with your approval, please sign and return the attached card.

_____

Toyrarian

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP MANZANAR TOY LOAN

NAME _____

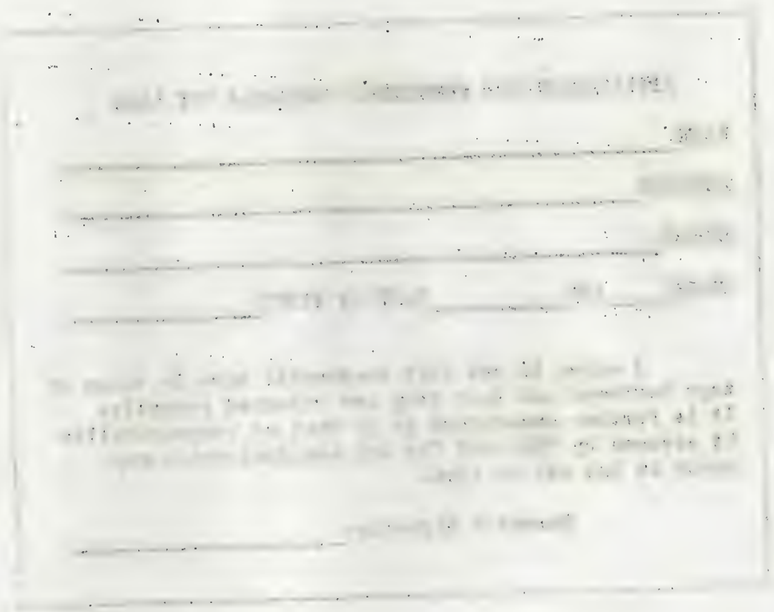
ADDRESS _____

SCHOOL _____

GRADE ____ AGE _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

I agree to see that reasonable care is taken of toys borrowed and that they are returned promptly. It is further understood by me that no responsibility is assumed by TOY LOAN for any accident which may occur in the use of toys.

Parent's Signature _____



BORROWER'S CARD

The information which has been secured on the application card is transferred to the borrower's card provided for that purpose, i.e., NAME, AGE, ADDRESS AND GRADE.

When a child selects a toy, for instance, a wagon or doll, the Toyrarian will write the toy number or description on the Borrower's Card in the space provided for that purpose. In the column marked, "Due" the date the toy is to be returned is entered. When the toy is returned, the date is entered in the space and the last column under the heading, "Condition" the letter "U" unsatisfactory, or "S" satisfactory is recorded. This depends upon the condition of the toy when the child returns it. It also gives the Toyrarian a check on those children who take care of the toys.

NAME NO.

ADDRESS

AGE GRADE SCHOOL

Toy No.	Due	Ret'd	Cond.

OVERDUE NOTICE

When a toy becomes overdue, a notice is sent to the grade teacher who reminds the child. If the child does not bring the toy within the next day or two, a first notice is sent to the child's parents or guardian. Generally this is sufficient.

FIRST NOTICE

Dear Mrs._____

Your child has borrowed the following toy which is now overdue and should be returned to the Toy Center.

No._____

No._____

We know this is an oversight on your part and would appreciate having you arrange for its return. Thank you.

_____
Toyrarian

SECOND OVERDUE NOTICE

After a reasonable length of time, if no response is received from the first notice sent out, a second notice is sent. Should there be no response to this it would be the duty of the Toyrarian to make contact with the child, the child's teacher or parent.

SECOND NOTICE

Dear Mrs._____

May we again call your attention to the toy your child has overdue.

Toy Loan charges no fines, thus all children are placed on their honor. Your cooperation in the return of toys will help us retain this policy.

Very sincerely yours,

_____
Toyrarian

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